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Chapter 8: Participant-led video diaries

Introduction

In this chapter we introduce the unconventional methodology of participant-led video diaries which, combined with narrative interviews, involves collecting and analysing multi-modal (audio, visual and textual) data, adopting a qualitative perspective and a social constructionist epistemology (Knoblauch, 2012). Our study was part of a multi-disciplinary research council funded project, which sought to explore how digital technologies affect our ability to manage switches across work-life boundaries. The '*For Interested Readers*' box at the end of this chapter provides links to further information on this project. Our analysis of our participants' video diaries, and their discussion of these, illustrates the theoretical and reflexive insights to be gained from this method. However, our main aim here is to encourage use of this methodology by presenting a description, including participants' feedback, to encourage an informed choice for video researchers. In so doing, we consider some of the more pragmatic problems and pitfalls we encountered, so that future video researchers are prepared to confront these.

The use of video as research methodology in organization and management studies is not widespread, although Christianson (2016) argues that it is growing, with six times as many studies in top tier organization and management journals for the period 2010-2015 compared to 1990-1994. However, her review still only amounts to 56 articles between 1990 and 2015. Currently then video research is 'unconventional' for this field. However, video research methodology has been used in other disciplines (e.g. psychology, human-computer interaction, sociology), many of which overlap with organization and management, for

example, detailed studies of specific occupations (e.g. Heath, Luff, & Sanchez Svensson, 2007).

A recent increase in video-based research (see forthcoming special issue of *Organizational Research Methods*, Spring 2017) may reflect growing interest in the visual elements of organization and management (e.g. Meyer, Höllerer, Jancsary, & van Leeuwen, 2013). This recognises the importance of capturing not just the *extent* of experience through quantitative measures or the *meaning* of experience through textual data, but also the *symbolic and tacit* aspects of experience through visual framing (i.e. how visual representation may present a particular construction of reality that is difficult to verbalise). It may also reflect widespread general use of digital technologies, for example, the greater use of videos for training and other purposes (Jarrett & Liu 2016). While not seeking to equate detailed empirical enquiry with, say, YouTube content, the potential relevance and impact of video-based research to wider audiences is clear. Indeed, Jewitt (2012, p 4) celebrates the 'share-ability' of the video method.

Researchers incorporate video into their research designs in many ways depending on their research objectives (Jewitt, 2012): analysing existing videos; creating their own; recording specific events as they unfold; or, less often, asking participants to make their own video recordings. In general, however, supporters of the methodology highlight its ability to capture naturally-occurring, real-time events and activities, micro-interactions, including non-verbal aspects of communication, and tacit or unacknowledged actions and knowledge which would not be recalled in surveys or interviews (Jewitt, 2012). Additionally, videos can be considered a uniquely multi-modal method of research, capturing both sound and vision (Toraldo, Islam, & Mangia, 2016). In this chapter, we review some of the range of relevant

video research studies to give an idea of the versatility of the method and to attract others to consider how video research might develop their own area of research.

The main part of the chapter describes our own methodology which is unconventional for a video study because we asked research participants to keep their own video diaries. These were then sent to the research team for analysis, later forming the focus for in-depth narrative interviews. It is far more common for researchers to video some event or activity themselves (e.g. through a static camera or as a form of video ethnography) than put the camcorder in the participants' hands (Hindmarsh & Llewellyn, 2016). Doing so raises new issues around ethics, research participation and power. Our approach prompted reflection on the nature of participant involvement, emphasising that it is not only the content of the videos which is of research interest but also the taking of the videos themselves (i.e. how and why particular images were captured). Methodological reflexivity (Johnson & Duberley, 2003) encouraged us to consider how the conduct of our research affects findings; our study encouraged not only reflection on our adoption of video as methodology, but how participants also shaped the design and outcomes of the study (see also Whiting, Symon, Roby, & Chamakiotis, 2016). Additionally, we draw attention to how the videos encouraged the participants to reflect on their actions in relation to the management of work-life boundaries, an effect referred to by Toraldo et al (2016 p 10) as 'video as reflective artefact'.

We begin the chapter with a review of current visual/video research and then describe our own study, including the motivation and rationale for adopting this particular video methodology. We recount the method as it unfolded and provide some detail on our own data analysis strategy so far. Our intention is to re-visit the data with other foci and strategies in mind, thus illustrating the potential malleability of the video method (Jewitt, 2012). We

highlight the theoretical and practical implications of our video study for our research field of work-life boundary management and finish with a reflexive section on our experience of the method, both empirically and pragmatically.

Visual research methods: a brief review

Visual research methods have been used in the humanities for many years (Crary, 1990), spreading to medicine, cognitive science and classroom studies (Erickson, 2011), as well as social sciences, such as anthropology and sociology (Bell & Davison, 2013). However, those in organization and management studies have been slower to adopt visual methods (Bell & Davison, 2013; Ray & Smith, 2012). Amongst the first were Lucy Suchman's work at Xerox in the 1980s and Christian Heath's work on the London Underground in the 1990s (Erickson, 2011). Since then, video-recordings have been used to make detailed studies of specific occupations such as surgeons and auctioneers (for example, Heath et al., 2007), and more recently to capture the unfolding of strategic decisions in meetings (Gylfe, Franck, Lebaron, & Mantere, 2016). Video enables the study of interactions in these occupational and organizational settings; not just talk, but gesture, tone, use of artefacts and spatial interactions.

The late adoption of visual methods in organizational settings facilitates learning from other disciplines, 'borrow[ing] from arts disciplines and the social sciences' (Bell & Davison, 2013, p 171), and consolidating learning rather than 'reinventing knowledge about the visual and its workings' (Meyer et al., 2013, p 491). Frameworks or typologies of visual methods within organization studies are embryonic. Ray & Smith (2012) classify research by who (participant, researcher, archive or hybrid) produces the visual material. Bell & Davison (2013) categorize by whether visual research is empirically or theoretically driven. Meyer et

al. (2013) identify five approaches to visual data based on research designs: archaeological, practice, strategic, dialogic and documenting. In our own research, user participation was critical to the research design, execution and interpretation. Participatory video research embraces a range of different methods including: participant-generated video; video diaries; auto-videography; distributed video studies; and community videos. Images created by research participants can be used in 'photo/video elicitation interviews' to better understand social and cultural phenomena (Bell & Davison, 2013; Erickson, 2011). Non-participatory methods which use researcher-produced visual images include video interaction analysis, workplace studies, focused ethnography, video ethnography and video shadowing. Here video extends and supplements more traditional methods such as ethnography (Meyer et al., 2013; Rose, 2007). Third party pre-existing video material can also be analysed as data.

Visual images are becoming increasingly important in organization and management research, reflecting the changing nature of organizations and society (Bell & Davison, 2013). Visual communication provides an 'immediate, multisensory impact that comes from viewing an image' (Bell, Warren, & Schroeder, 2014, p 2), which gives 'an accuracy and plenitude of description that the verbal language cannot match' (Meyer et al., 2013, p 496). This multisensory impact aids cognitive processing, improving memory and communication of complex messages (Bell & Davison, 2013). From the researcher's perspective, visual images benefit over notes or transcripts in allowing the researcher to repeatedly view the video, effectively revisiting 'the field' (Gylfe et al., 2016). Visual methods have an important role as a way of observing organizational practices and behaviours and learning from these observations in a reflexive manner.

Video diaries specifically potentially benefit both researcher and participant, producing a real-time record of people's behaviours and thoughts. They capture rich visual and audio data portraying 'emotions and complexity' (Roberts, 2011, p 679), affording participants the ability to record non-linear and disjointed trains of thought in less structured ways than in text (Noyes, 2004). For example, Alonzo & Kim describe how the use of videos allowed them to 'preserve some of the messiness and complexity of classroom studies' (2015, p 5), while Christianson (2016) considers capturing non-verbal behaviours useful in the study of emotion.

One important claim is for participants' self-expression and 'voice' in the research process, affording them the ability to 'frame and represent their own lives' (Jones et al., 2014, p 396) and to 'talk more freely about their unseen day-to-day experiences' (Noyes, 2004, p 196), and encouraging self-examination and reflection (Jones et al., 2014; Noyes, 2004). Participant voice and self-expression are claimed to support participant empowerment, through their ability to talk freely without interference from the researcher (Jones et al., 2014). However, these claims of empowerment are contested. Participants are unlikely to have total freedom or control over what they film, as the content will have been conceptually framed by the researcher and therefore the researcher is not totally absent from the filming (Jones et al., 2014). This does not mean, however, that participants totally lack empowerment; they remain experts of their context, even when making choices in response to researcher prompts (Tribe, 2006). A further criticism is that providing prompts to participants may lead to 'ventriloquization' (Jones et al., 2014, p 399), where the researcher influences their thoughts and words. Others suggest that this influence by the researcher on the participant lends itself to a more collaborative form of image production, overcoming some of the ethical concerns in such work (Bell & Davison, 2013). Nevertheless, the questions of whose voice is actually

being heard in a video diary and to what extent claims of equalising the power relationship between researcher and participant are justified need to be considered (Pauwels, 2004).

Whether these issues are relevant will largely depend on the empirical question and epistemology of the research. However, there are practical and methodological challenges associated with visual research methods, including video diaries, which will be relevant whatever the design. One major challenge is the potentially large dataset, and its storage, sharing and analysis. There are also ethical and legal challenges for the publication of visual materials in terms of confidentiality and copyright (Bell & Davison, 2013). Some of these challenges can be overcome through the use of video diaries, where research participants choose the content and therefore have control over the data collected and through the adoption of adaptive consent forms, discussed below.

We now turn to our own use of the video methodology, addressing many of the issues raised in the literature reviewed.

The Digital Brain Switch project: Capturing and understanding boundary transition in the digital age

Here, we introduce our research project to provide context and to explain our rationale for adopting a video methodology. Our research sought to explore how digital technologies affect our ability to manage switches across physical, temporal and psychological boundaries (Ashforth, Kreiner, & Fugate, 2000; Clark, 2000). Switches were theoretically defined as rapid (almost instantaneous) transitions between different activities or areas of our lives, for example, switching from reading personal emails to work emails on a mobile phone. We sought to develop previous research that has examined the nature of work-life boundaries

(e.g. Clark, 2000) and work-life boundary management (Ashforth et al, 2000; Cohen, Duberley, & Musson, 2009) and the impact of digital technologies on working lives (Mazmanian, Orlikowski, & Yates, 2013). We were interested in bringing these literatures together and developing them further. We observed the immediacy of using personal, mobile, handheld devices and the plethora of social media available relating to both working and personal lives. We noted how individuals can move fairly seamlessly between professional and personal social media platforms, by using devices that support both personal and working lives. As such, we wondered whether Ashforth et al's (2000) idea of 'micro-transitions' — for example, commuting or going to a movie after work — were quite 'micro' enough in the digital age. We felt such digitally-supported transitions could be considered fairly immediate 'switches' and wondered what the implications of these might be for boundary management and identity transitions (Ollier-Malaterre, Rothbard, & Berg, 2013). We wanted to capture some of these digitally-supported switches, observe their context and understand how individuals manage these switches in real-time.

Our two major issues at the outset were: whom to observe and how to capture these switches. First, we adopted a purposive sampling approach by deciding to focus on three 'extreme' case examples (Saunders, 2012). This involves selecting participants whose data will enable us to find out the most (Patton, 2002). Here, their selection was driven by boundary theory (Ashforth et al., 2000). 45 participants were drawn from three UK-based groups: (1) social entrepreneurs (SEs), whose challenges might include financial insecurity, commitment to create social value and lack of a defined workplace; (2) office workers (OWs), whose challenges might include having less control over work processes and use of technologies and a variety of more closely defined role identities; and (3) university students (USs) aged 18-25, whose challenges might include ill-defined work-life boundaries and identity

permeability. Our recruitment literature made it clear that participation involved a video diary study and we did not observe any differences between the groups in terms of receptivity or approaches to this method. We found examples of creativity and reflexivity in respect of filming in each group. We did note that, compared to the other groups, some office workers found it difficult to film in their offices (though some filmed themselves working at home).

Secondly, we wanted participants to capture what was meaningful to them so we could understand their interpretations and experiences. This was also a potent reason for wanting the data collection to be in the hands of the participants. We left it to participants to decide what constituted a switch, what technologies mattered and what boundaries were salient to them. As highlighted earlier, this is one element of our study which makes it unconventional in relation to previous video-based methodologies. Coming from a social constructionist perspective, we understood that boundaries and transitions are not existing 'out there' as objective, observable, generalizable entities, but would be named and positioned as such by individuals in interaction with others (Cohen et al., 2009); we were interested in capturing this process itself. Similarly, we did not want to make temporal or conceptual assumptions about when 'work' ends and 'life' begins or what these concepts constituted for our participants. Not having pre-determined categories would allow new meanings and constructions to emerge; potentially challenging assumptions in the work-life boundary literature, which is rather restricted by a focus on family, 9-5 employment schedules and concepts of work rooted in the pre-digital 1950s (Davies & Frink, 2014).

Participants could have kept written diaries (Bolger, Davis, & Rafaeli, 2003) or audio-recordings (Crozier & Cassell, 2016) to capture such material. However, written diaries rely too much on reported behaviour and audio-recordings would not fully capture the role of the

technology in the switch (or other kind of materiality, Hindmarsh & Llewellyn, 2016). Additionally, we wanted to capture the more tacit elements of switching — the potential messiness, complexity and disjointed nature of its construction — as well as the physical and social contexts of switching. Retaining a sense of the participants' understanding and interpretation of, and reflections on, these switches was also important. Participants were encouraged to narrate their filming where relevant, providing a valuable commentary on their own experience of the method as well as adding interpretation to the videos themselves (see next section).

Once the week of videoing was completed, we conducted narrative interviews (Holloway & Jefferson, 2000), partly, to ensure we fully captured individual interpretation and reflection. Our study also used 'video elicitation' (Henry & Fetters, 2012), asking our participants to review and comment on a small selection of the video clips *they* had taken (see next section), which was important in situating the video clips in a narrative account of the participants' lives. Video diaries can capture the minutiae of moment-to-moment events and activities but may neglect an in-depth understanding of an individual's life history (Musson, 2004). We wanted to understand the specific switching moments captured in the videos in the context of the individuals' backgrounds, personal and work roles and general experience of boundaries and transitions. By conducting the interviews post-filming, we could discuss the videos themselves and avoid participants' videoing being affected by detailed pre-discussion of their circumstances.

Clearly, asking participants to keep video diaries raises important issues concerning informed consent and confidentiality (Whiting & Pritchard, in press). This was addressed at the design stage. We took steps to ensure the study did not overstep ethical boundaries or place others in

difficult positions. This required careful planning, input from institutional ethical committees, and negotiation with participants themselves. It meant recognising that obtaining informed consent is not a one-off 'tick box' exercise nor a 'one size fits all' arrangement (Mok, Cornish, & Tarr, 2015). As it was a relatively unconventional method for the institutions involved, there was some prolonged consultation and iterative ethical planning.

To ensure that participants knew what they were committing to, we produced detailed information sheets and conducted individual briefings, assuring them they could contact us at any time during the study if any issues arose or if they wanted to withdraw. We were also aware that the 'share-ability' of videos (Jewitt, 2012, p 6) may raise issues of confidentiality. With videos forming a major part of our dataset, we knew we would want to show them at various events and online. Consequently, we advised participants not to film: anything of a confidential, sensitive or highly personal nature; children (unless their own children and both parents give their consent); other people (unless in a public place where they might reasonably expect to be observed); in shopping centres or areas with high security status; or when cycling or driving. We were careful to obtain informed consent and give participants options regarding their identifiability and our use of their video data. For example, participants had the option to refuse our use of any data in presentations or academic publications if they were potentially identifiable from those video clips.

This was our plan. We now set out what actually happened once we were confronted by the participants' lived context.

Methodology

Table 1 summarises the key methodological stages of our planned research. We have published further detail of this elsewhere (Whiting et al., 2016) with our commentary on issues we encountered in carrying this out. Here we want to highlight issues that the participants confronted in performing this methodology, drawn from their feedback, comments and actions captured in the videos, debrief and interviews.

[Table 1 about here]

We undertook a pilot study using members of the research team and a few university colleagues to help refine the detail and work out the practicalities of the methodology. This meant we could offer practical guidance to participants about the filming. In wording our recruitment literature in the main study, we struggled to find the right balance between making it sound interesting and worthwhile, and being realistic about the time, energy and commitment involved. So we applied our learning from the pilot to foreshadow issues in recruitment and provide solutions. For example, we (rightly) anticipated that some would find it hard to maintain recording for seven consecutive days. We suggested taking a short break if it became too onerous, so long as they ultimately filmed footage across a mix of weekdays and weekends. We knew that asking participants to take part in the video study required considerable commitment; so, unsurprisingly, recruitment took longer than anticipated.

We used the share screen function of Skype to brief participants via a short presentation including guidance on what to film, ethical considerations and camcorder features such as its tripod, flip-out rotatable screen and review function. Our Instructions asked them to focus on their different roles in their work and private lives and to record how they switched, tried to switch, or were externally prompted/forced to switch between them. Ideally we wanted them

to capture what they saw in front of them rather than narrating switches retrospectively, though the latter was useful for switches too difficult to capture in the moment. Copies of participant documentation are available from our project website (see *For Interested Readers* box below). Sending the camcorder and instructions in advance allowed participants to practise filming and identify issues to discuss at the briefing. A few struggled with set-up issues, for example, not realising that we had pre-loaded the camcorder with a memory card. The camcorder itself was generally seen as appealing in terms of its size and design; one participant described it to his colleagues as *'quite cool'* (Adam, OW, video). Even those who initially worried that they might struggle to use it, later commented on its ease of use (*'rather marvellous'*, Cressida, SE, video). Of course, we could have asked them to make videos on their own devices with which they were already familiar. However, this would have meant collecting a variety of different formats and qualities of video material, which also may have been incompatible with our analysis software and, crucially, would have made it more difficult to capture switches involving their own devices. We were in the fortunate position of having research funding which covered the equipment costs. However, providing the camcorders brought its own difficulties in terms of ensuring delivery and return of the devices with the data. We resolved this by using a courier service to collect the camcorder with the data from each participant from a location and at a time slot of their choosing.

We debriefed participants shortly after they completed their video recording, asking them to reflect on their experience of taking part in the video study. This was when many mentioned the effect of the camcorder — and taking part in the study more generally — on their behaviour. We took notes of these phone conversations, later typed up. This was followed a couple of weeks later by an in-depth narrative interview (mostly face-to-face but a few via Skype) lasting around one hour. The aim was to discuss excerpts from the video data and to

embed these discussions in a deeper understanding of participants' work-life narratives. Using a set of open-ended questions concerning general career narrative, technology use, and meaning and experience of WLB, and switching, we explored their own constructions of these concepts through the reflexivity afforded by the video methodology. Meanwhile, we also viewed the videos and selected excerpts to discuss in the interviews as 'critical incidents', in that selected videos might include 'moments of success, failure or puzzlement' but also other 'instances […] worthy of comment' (Fry & Ketteridge, 2009 p 477). We had intended participants to select these, but most said they did not have the time so the choice was usually made by us. We selected videos that either appeared particularly representative or contradictory, required some explanation or raised a seemingly critical issue for the participant. Three or four videos per interview were all we could accommodate without overburdening the rest of the interview. These were watched together by participant and researcher, with the participant prompted to reflect on the bigger picture in terms of what had been happening at the time of the recording.

Our instructions assured participants that there was no one right way to approach the filming and to be creative. Comments by participants about taking part, often made in passing whilst engaged in their daily activities, showed the video study as a lived experience. Some related to the mechanics of recording the video data, but we also observed how participants performed two sometimes competing roles: that of being a 'good participant' versus being their 'authentic selves'.

For example, in the following extract, Simon is attempting to bring a very large model into a school prior to use in a street parade. These attempts feature the participant (mainly voice

only) and school staff, as between them they seek a doorway tall enough to accommodate the model.

> *Participant: I'm doing a video diary of my day for the Open University.*
>
> *Staff member: Oh sorry [puts hand over her mouth].*
>
> *Participant: No, it's not a problem. But I keep forgetting to turn [the camcorder] on and do things, so that little bit at reception where they were trying to... would have been really good.* (Simon, SE, video)

The idea of a university-sponsored video study initially silences the school staff member who perhaps fears her utterance will be out of place. However, we also hear the participant's wistful reflection on material that could have been used as video footage but which was missed, an example that indicates responsibility to the project to show us 'good' or 'useful' data. In some videos the potential for a disappointed reaction from the researchers is anticipated:

> *'I feel like I shouldn't waste your time by showing you lots of boring things.'* (Xanthe, US, video)

This quote is typical of participants' apprehension that we would find their data 'boring' and regretting that their week had not been more eventful. In debriefings and interviews we sought to reassure participants of the value of everyday ordinary routines. One participant shared his delight with us over a particularly satisfying moment he captured:

> *'There was one stellar moment when I was filming something and my dad got in touch with me via iChat and his video came up on my screen.'* (Stephen, SE, debrief)

This represented a rare instance of an unplanned perceived switch caught live on video, since the research design made it easier to capture planned transitions (as opposed to unexpected ones such as interruptions). Having been advised by us about ethical considerations, acting these out also became part of being the 'good participant'; participants devised ways of

informing those in their lives what was going on (one student posting a notice on Facebook warning fellow students she would be on campus with a camcorder). Others recorded themselves negotiating access, providing a visual/audio record of others consenting to be filmed.

The creativity of being a 'good participant' extended to adapting and developing the methodology. They recorded sometimes quite lengthy pieces to camera, addressing us with their reflections. Several created innovative ways of filming: in a shared quiet work space, one participant typed and filmed messages to us which appeared on his computer monitor (see Figure 1).

[Figure 1 about here]

Another filmed her friends' feet when they met to avoid showing their faces (see Figure 2).

[Figure 2 about here]

Others supplemented their own reflections with interviews with family members, colleagues and flatmates. Participants were also keen for us to know that their videos did not fully represent their lives and to explain this lack of authenticity or completeness. A few commented on how hard they had found the filming, because it was difficult to remember to take the camcorder with them, their work involved confidential meetings, they worked with children or shared offices with colleagues who objected to being filmed. Participants also reported being too exhausted to film, editing what they were prepared to show us (house too untidy), and explaining the absence of family and friends in the footage (family members not wanting to be filmed or being too tired to negotiate consent from others). These adaptive methods and reflections show how participants became researchers into their own lives as they reflected not just on their switches but on the wider context of their lives. They also

prompted insight into our empirical investigation by demonstrating the extent to which we can only partially control how we conduct our lives, given the degree of intertwining with the demands and expectations of others.

Although we anticipated the camcorder's role as an audience or observer, we realised that this was two-fold as participants filmed both themselves and others. For some the camcorder had a discomforting effect, causing them to reflect on the effects on themselves, and on the others that they filmed, of watching and of being watched. At its most straightforward, the discomfort related to self-consciousness when filming out and about:

> *'When I was in the street I felt that people probably thought what I was doing was a bit odd so after a while I pretended that the camcorder was a mobile phone.'*
>
> (Charles, OW, debrief)

One participant sought to explain his reluctance to film due to its effects on others:

> *'I think what I found difficult was that I work in an open plan office so when I say that it was intrusive, it would be intrusive to other people if I had video recorded in that space'* (Alastair, OW, debrief)

In the end, the only videos from this participant were pieces he recorded to camera at home at the beginning and end of each day, though this was an exception in our study. The effects of using video technology extended to a more disciplinary effect, with one participant likening the camcorder to an invisible line manager:

> *'it kind of made me try to be more coherent in what I was doing in demonstrating levels of efficiency that I might not have bothered about before because it was like you have an audience, so you want to be able to do it well, and this is like an invisible line manager.'* (Michael, SE, interview)

Here the camcorder role leads to self-monitoring and impression management as the participant reflects on how filming changed his work behaviour during the study, needing to demonstrate efficiency. But in performing his authenticity, the participant reflects on and reports this to us as well.

Analysis and findings

Our data were multi-modal: visual, audio and textual. Analysis is widely acknowledged as the most complex aspect of the methodology (e.g. Gylfe et al., 2016) and there are a variety of strategies to choose from, ranging from content analysis to more in depth analytic techniques such as discourse analysis and visual semiotics, though many adopt a broad thematic analysis.

Initially, the video and interview data with accompanying transcripts plus debrief notes were all uploaded to NVivo10 for analysis. This is one of a range of software options for data storage, management and analysis. We required an analysis package that could handle multi-modal data including video clips with accompanying transcripts and which could be stored on a secure server to enable shared access by the research team.

As qualitative researchers, we focused on the meaning and interpretation of the visual images, spoken commentary and interview narratives. One challenge in analysing participant video diaries is that, unlike interviews or shadowing (Gill, 2011), the researcher is not physically present when the data are constructed. So the contents can surprise the researcher. Participatory methods offer the opportunity to analyse both data and methodological process. We had not anticipated the creativity of our participants, the extent to which the videos would yield methodological as well as empirical insights or how the former could inform the latter

(Whiting et al., 2016). The second challenge is that videos are time-consuming to view and analyse. Interviews, once converted into a transcript, can be scanned for key words or themes; the researcher is already familiar with the contents having been present when the interview data were constructed. Video's dual modalities require viewing in real time.

We analysed both video and interview data initially using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). A thematic approach is often the starting point for qualitative analysis, can be used with visual and textual data, is adaptive to different epistemologies (c.f. content analysis) and was familiar to the research team working on the data. It provided an initial overview of the dataset enabling identification of areas for greater attention and was compatible with supplemental and more specialised forms of analysis as mentioned below. The same umbrella themes (work-life balance, identity, boundaries, switching, technology and methodology) were used across the video and interview datasets for coherence of analysis. These themes were both 'top-down' and 'bottom-up' in that they drew from academic theory and literature but also from our pilot data. Detailed sub-themes were developed as emergent from the analysis of each umbrella theme. Following this initial thematic analysis, further analysis was carried out, for example, individual case study analysis and discourse analysis, in relation to specific research questions. Though analysis is still ongoing, our innovative method revealed new conceptual issues in the field of work-life boundary management. The '*For Interested Readers*' box below provides links to our dissemination videos and metadata statement.

One area that emerged from the analysis relates to the changing nature of boundaries and the dynamic nature of how these are managed. By inviting participants to determine what constituted a switch for them, we were able to see their use of technology in how boundaries

were maintained, eroded and reinforced often in ways they did not articulate verbally (Chamakiotis, Symon, Whiting, & Roby, 2015). Video and interview data offered a more nuanced approach that goes beyond simply describing people as 'integrators' (those who blend boundaries) or 'segmenters' (those who keep them separate) (Sayah, 2013). Our analysis included the emergence of new 'domains' for example, where participants drew boundaries between being online and offline. The 'online domain' was constructed as a space that participants switched to and from and in which both personal and work-related activities took place (Whiting, Roby, Symon, & Chamakiotis, 2015a).

Other empirical findings could also only have come from video data. For example, one emergent finding relates to what we have termed 'digi housekeeping' (Whiting, Roby, Symon, & Chamakiotis, 2015b). This refers to the range of tasks that participants undertook daily to support and maintain the 'online domain', for example, charging devices, deleting junk emails, setting up laptops in different locations, to name but a few (Figure 3). This was not a concept we had foreseen or asked participants to consider. Its emergence was solely based on what we observed participants doing, sometimes without any specific accompanying commentary.

[Figure 3 about here]

Reflections on our unconventional methodology: the pros and cons of video diaries

Having outlined our methodology and some of our findings, we now reflect on what we and our participants have learnt. We start by drawing together some key advantages and disadvantages as set out in Table 2.

[Table 2 about here]

Our study successfully captured the mundane and everyday aspects of our participants' lives. It allowed us to see places and behaviours to which we would not otherwise have had access, for example, the early morning routine of one participant as he switched between firing up his laptop, eating breakfast, playing solitaire on his notebook, listening to the radio, checking work emails and feeding the chickens. As discussed, however, it was also seen by some as intrusive (of themselves, families or colleagues). Participants told us how they had edited out some of the 'messiness and complexity' of everyday lives, prompting us to undertake a more reflexive approach to the data. Specifically, we sought to understand rather than resolve the tension within a method which some claim produces naturalistic data yet also involves participant behaviours prompted by the recording device itself, a phenomenon referred to as the 'observer's paradox' (Labov, 1972). Recognising this paradox as inevitable (Gordon, 2012), our constructionist approach meant we saw this as an opportunity to investigate what this involved in our own study (Whiting et al, 2016).

The camcorders allowed participants not only to film themselves but to capture a narrative to accompany whatever they filmed. The methodological combination of visuals and narrative is not unique to video, as photo-narrative studies such as Woodley-Baker (2009) show, but it does offer the unique combination of participant decisions over what to film and narrate simultaneously rather than as a two-stage process. This resulted in data which captured 'in the moment' actions together with explanations for such filming. Physical switches offered time for reflection by participants, as they narrated their transition, often from one role to another. Camcorders thus allowed us to become a virtual shadow to our participants. They allowed us to capture both visio-spatial information and the context of the micro-transition as it unfolded, enabling us to explore boundary management in a much more detailed way than has previously been attempted in this research area.

We also reflected on the extent to which the video study was participant-led. Whilst the study enabled participants to become 'researchers' into their own lives, we were also an absent presence. The camcorder was a physical proxy for us, a reminder of the additional role that we had asked them to undertake and itself an additional piece of digital technology with which they had to engage. Further, in keeping with the view that 'the researcher, whether physically present or not, is inevitably part of the research world being studied' (Gibson, 2005, p 3), we also left a trace in the data through our research agenda and language. One-way conversations and comments like '*Hopefully this has been of some help to you and no doubt we'll talk about it'* (Stephen, SE, video) reaffirmed not only our presence in the data through our research objectives, but also the research team as an audience who would later watch the footage.

Less obvious instances of our presence included adopting the language of the research study in participant video narratives, using terms from our briefing material, an act of 'ventriloquizing' (Jones et al., 2014). For example, one participant filmed his usual commuter train and simply narrated *'transitioning tool – most days'* by way of description. On the face of it, this is slightly at odds with claims that video diaries allow participants 'to use their own voices, language and expression to narrate their lives' (Brown, Costley, Friend, & Varey, 2010, p 423). Adopting our terms closes down rather than opens up the narration, using our language as the end point, not the starting point for their own commentary. We found that this kind of interaction revealed insights into the methodology, challenging us to explore our data more reflexively.

Our own participation in the pilot study alerted us to the importance of the video diary as a reflective tool, particularly when the video data were reviewed and considered, including in the follow-up interview. It enabled us to consider both empirical and methodological aspects of the study from the participant perspective. Videos also prompted reflection, learning and some reported behaviour change on the part of the participants. This reflexivity on the part of the participants led to the objectification of self (allowing participants a new perspective on their daily lives), affirmation (of valued activities and experiences), realisation and learning about themselves, and recognition of the need for change (which led to making plans for different behaviours).

To summarise, the visual nature of the video data made it more graphic and memorable; this creates the potential for simultaneous data gathering and impact (on other researchers and on participants themselves). The video data allow participants to 'see' themselves over time, achieving the benefits of the cumulative nature of longitudinal reflection. Participants did not need specific expert intervention (in the form of our analysis) in order to recognise issues in their lives and to consider changes. Unlike, say, a questionnaire, videos capture 'what actually happened' and participants themselves noted how this differed from what they thought happened and how they would have reported it if simply asked. Arguably, reflecting on this makes participants more likely to implement and own these changes. Our research design has not allowed us to investigate this empirically, but where participants engage in sense-making in their own terms they may be more able to relate to it.

In terms of research dissemination, the videos made for striking and memorable components to presentations at academic conferences and practitioner-focused events. Audiences always comment on how struck they are by the video excerpts we show (a picture may be worth a

thousand words, a video even more). This prompted us to seek follow-on funding to produce two research dissemination videos, including participant footage, to capitalise on this feature (see links in '*For Interested Readers*' box below). However, presenting videos was often fraught with technological difficulty (despite our efforts to ensure software compatibility on unfamiliar computers). On occasion we have had to show videos without sound and without a red filter which turned our video clips pond green. Neither of these are ideal scenarios but adding subtitles to the video excerpts in our presentations turned out to be a really good decision. As videos grow in popularity, we anticipate presentation venues becoming more sophisticated in providing the necessary supportive technology.

Conclusion

Our aim here has been to present our unconventional methodology, participant-led video diaries combined with narrative interviews, to encourage others in its use. We have been open about the problems encountered and taken a reflexive approach to the methodology which appreciates the inevitability of research and researcher effects in any research design, providing some orientation for budding video researchers. Overall, our conclusion is that the insights provided by the method far outweigh the problems as we find ourselves still fascinated by the data and keen to share them with others. Our hope is that others will incorporate participant-led video methodology in their own research areas and that this methodology will become accepted practice rather than unconventional in the organization and management field.

[*For interested readers* box about here]

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Tables

Table 1: Key methodological stages

Stage 0	Pilot study with researchers (and colleagues) as participants.
Stage 1	Initial briefing, mostly over Skype, after camcorder (Toshiba S40 Camileo) and participant documents (instructions, information sheet and consent form) posted to participant; briefing includes outline ethical guidance of 'what not to film'.
Stage 2	Participant carries out a seven day period of filming; researchers remain in contact.
Stage 3	Short post-filming debriefing of participant by telephone; researcher views videos to assess quality, quantity and scope of footage.
Stage 4	Researcher conducts in-depth interviews with participants (face-to-face or via Skype) which includes reviewing video excerpts.

Stage 5	Researcher analysis of video and interview data including: thematic analysis across data sources; individual case study analysis; discourse analysis.
Stage 6	Webinar with participants to exchange feedback and discuss future joint steps.

Table 2: Key Methodological Pros and Cons

Advantages of Video Use	**Disadvantages of Video Use**
Capture mundane and everyday in the moment	Intrusive technology
Participant definition of boundaries and transitions	Disciplining effects
Captures the context of the transition as it occurs, including the presence of others and the physical surroundings	Analytic challenge
Allows participants to 'see' themselves for reflexive learning	Persuading participants to take part
Echoes the visual nature of new digital technologies and digital media culture	Technical difficulties with camcorders

Figures

Figure 1: Example of participant creativity: the 'silent movie' approach

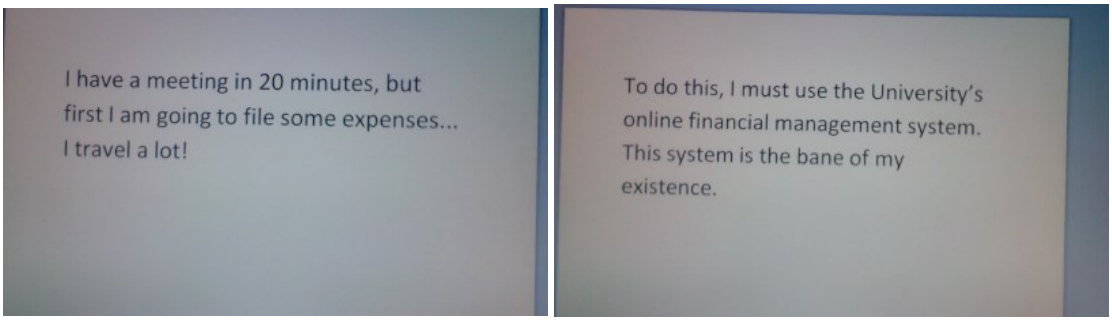

Figure 2: Example of participant creativity: avoiding filming friends' faces

Figure 3: Examples of digi-housekeeping: transferring files between devices by USB, trying to access webmail from home

For Interested Readers

Digital Brain Switch project website

The project website includes a section with copies of the participant documentation i.e. information sheets, instructions for videoing and consent forms

http://digitalbrainswitch.org.uk

Dissemination videos on YouTube of Digital Brain Switch project findings

Work-life boundaries in the digital age

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ima1HsT8QYA

Three implications of our digi lives

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7w-huJ4Z544

The project metadata statement is available here: http://oro.open.ac.uk/46687/